

Message Text

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E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PDEV, WA, SF

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: CONVERSATIONS WITH BOTHA

1. SUMMARY: THE SECRETARY, FOREIGN MINISTER OWEN AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS JAMIESON MET, WITHOUT AIDES, WITH PIK BOTHA THE EVENING OF JULY 26 TO DISCUSS THE NAMIBIAN PROPOSALS. BOTHA KEPT HIS POSITION OPEN AND WILL CONSULT WITH HIS PRIME MINISTER TONIGHT. HE URGED THAT WE PROTECT HIM BY SAYING NOTHING PUBLICLY. END SUMMARY.

2. THE SECRETARY, OWEN AND JAMIESON PRESENTED TO BOTHA THE STATEMENT THE CONTACT GROUP PLANS TO MAKE IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO EXPLAIN THEIR POSITION ON THE ISSUE OF WALVIS BAY. BOTHA WENT OVER THE STATEMENT LINE BY LINE AND BACK OVER PORTIONS OF IT. HE DID NOT CRITICIZE ANY PARTICULAR PART OF IT, BUT HE CLEARLY WANTED THE WESTERN GROUP TO ABSTAIN. THE WESTERN FOREIGN MINISTERS EXPLAINED THAT THEY HAD FACED A DIFFICULT CHOICE: THEY COULD HAVE ABSTAINED ON A RESOLUTION WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH WORSE FROM SOUTH AFRICA'S POINT OF VIEW; OR THEY COULD AGREE TO SUPPORT THE CURRENT RESOLUTION AND USE THEIR OFFER OF SUPPORT TO GAIN CONCESSIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA'S FAVOR. THEY CHOSE THE SECOND ALTERNATIVE.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 USUN N 03026 270303Z

3. BOTHA EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE NUMBER AND COMPOSITION OF THE UN FORCE. HE IS DISTURBED THAT THE FIGURE OF 5000 UN TROOPS IS BEING USED PUBLICLY. HE URGES THAT ALL TALK OF NUMBERS AND COMPOSITION CEASE. HE WANTS THESE ISSUES TO APPEAR TO GROW OUT OF CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE AND THE ADMINISTRATOR

GENERAL.

4. BOTH SAID, AND FOURIE CONFIRMED, THAT THE SOUTH AFRICANS WERE IMPRESSED WITH AHTISAARI, WHOM THEY MET DURING THEIR MEETING WITH WALDHEIM. ALSO CONTRIBUTING TO A GREATER SENSE OF CONFIDENCE WAS TELLING POINT MADE BY FOREIGN SECRETARY JAMIESON TO THE EFFECT THAT CANADA HAD BEEN ASKED TO PARTICIPATE IN UNTAG, AND IT WOULD REFUSE UNLESS THE COMPOSITION OF THE FORCE WAS SATISFACTORY TO THE PARTIES CONCERNED. IN OTHER WORDS, THE DECISION WAS NOT WALDHEIM'S ALONE.

5. BOTH WILL BE TALKING TO VORSTER AT MIDNIGHT JULY 26.

6. FOLLOWING MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTERS, BOTH JOINED THE CONTACT GROUP FOR DRINKS. HE WAS JOVIAL, PLEASANT AND FRANK. HE STATED TO THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR THAT HE HAD TWO CHOICES: EITHER TO GET HIS INSTRUCTIONS CHANGED, OR TO LEAVE, BECAUSE THE WESTERN MEMBERS WERE PLANNING TO VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE WALVIS BAY RESOLUTION. HE COMMENTED THAT HE NOW HAD AN APPRECIATION OF GREEK TRAGEDY. SOME AFFAIRS WERE OUTSIDE THE HANDS OF THOSE WHO ATTEMPTED TO MANAGE THEM. WHEN THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR COMMENTED THAT THAT WAS TOO FATALISTIC A VIEW, BOTH REPLIED THAT THE AFRIKAANER HAD TOO MUCH GERMAN BLOOD IN THEM TO FEEL OTHERWISE.
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PAGE 03 USUN N 03026 270303Z

7. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE AN AGREEMENT CAN BE ACHIEVED, BUT WE ARE ON THE KNIFE'S EDGE. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE HONOR BOTH'S REQUEST AND AVOID STATEMENT OF OPTIMISM ABOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS NOW UNDER WAY. YOUNG

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